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ABSTRACT

A questionnaire was developed in order to discover the aspects of P.L. 94-142 (the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975) that prove both most and least problematic for rural special education cooperatives. A cooperative was defined as any interdistrict administrative arrangement that provides specific services to member school districts. A total of 157 rural cooperatives was identified in 10 southern and midwestern states, and the director of each cooperative was included in the survey. Questionnaire items were generated from manuals used to monitor the states for compliance with the mandates of P.L. 94-142. According to survey responses, the items that proved most difficult for rural cooperatives in complying with the federal mandates were issues related to personnel knowledge regarding special education, the timelines specified by the law, and parental attendance at meetings to discuss the Individual Education Plan (IEP). The least difficult mandates related to parental rights, assessment issues, and writing the IEP. These findings have policy implications for teacher training institutions, teacher certification boards, and for legislators determining funding formulas. The appendix includes the questionnaire, initial cover letter, and follow-up letters to non-respondents. (JHZ)

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COMPLIANCE WITH PL94-142 MANDATES
IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMS

BY
Sandra Silver
October 1986

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COMPLIANCE WITH PL94-142 MANDATES
IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMS

The passage of PL94-142, The Education For All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, brought a new awareness of the difficulties associated with providing special education services in rural areas. Sher (1977, p 51), divides these problems of education in sparsely populated areas can be divided into two categories "access and equity". He avers that rural school children have historically lacked access to the services and resources necessary to meet their special education needs. Furthermore, available services tend to be either inappropriate for the child's needs or inferior to the services available in urban areas.

Many barriers to the provision of quality special education programs in rural areas are also recognized. These include: funding inadequacies; difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified personnel; underdeveloped services; and transportation difficulties associated with large geographic spaces, sparse population, and geographic barriers (National Association for Retarded Citizens, 1980; Helge, 1981, 1983; Ondell, 1982; Kirmer, Lockwood, Mickler, & Sweeney, 1984). Schrag (1979) further believes that the PL94-142 mandates and the consistency with which they are applied may in fact hamper the provision of quality special education services in rural areas. Thus, the effective implementation of PL94-142 in rural areas is a critical challenge to the American educational system.

As early as 1964, the need to develop alternative administrative arrangements for the provision and administration of special education services in rural areas was recognized. At that time, Lord and Isenberg (1964) assert that most rural school districts are too small to provide programs to children that constitute a small proportion of the student body. Jordan (1966) also states that local school districts large in geographic area but small in enrollment are not an appropriate base for administering comprehensive program. Thus, traditional arrangements for administering schools in sparsely populated areas generally preclude the provision of special education services.

The passage of PL94-142 fostered a burgeoning of cooperative arrangements for the provision and administration of special education programs in rural areas. The reason behind this unprecedented growth was twofold. First, handicapped children could no longer be denied a free appropriate public education. Because the provision of adequate special education services within an individual school district was often unfeasible

due to a widely scattered and extrememly diverse special education population coupled with limited resources, cooperative arrangements seemed a logical alternative. Second, the requirement that each application for PL94-142 monies be for a minimum of $7500 fostered collaboration as many small rural school districts were unable individually to generate sufficient allocations to receive these funds.

Despite the lack of research regarding their efficacy, cooperative arrangements have increased greatly in number (Helge, 1984). Cooperatives exist because they are viewed as a more efficient or effective means of meeting one or more of a school district's goals. Given an increased geographic area and a larger population base, cooperative arrangements are able to provide a greater continuum of services and better meet the needs of low-incidence populations residing in rural areas.

Cooperative arrangements vary on many dimensions. These include: number of school districts served; mode of governance; funding sources; staffing patterns; services rendered; professional personnel employed; and stated goals. Even where uniformity might be expected (i.e. intermediate units operating under the same state mandates) a large amount of variance occurs (Weatherman, 1975).

Regional cooperatives are not, however, a panacea for the difficulties inherent in providing special education services to handicapped childreb residing in rural areas. Cooperative arrangements may produce or exacerbate a variety of problems including: transportation difficulties; parental involvement; interpersonal roadblocks; goal displacement; locus of decision making; physical location of the unit; personnel administration; and abrogation of responsibility for handicapped children to the cooperative unit (Helge, 1981, 1984a; Ondell, 1982; Kirmer et al., 1984).

The need for research concerning the provision of special education services in rural areas is well recognized (Jordan, 1966; Sher, 1977; Helge, 1984). Despite the recognition of need, a dearth of research exists. The meager body of literature that does exist is viewed as: lacking experimental research; lacking sophistication; largely experiential based; failing to provide a comprehensive view of the rural education situation; and, limited in its usefulness for policy formation (Stephens, 1984). Thus, the need for continued research in the field of rural special education is evident.

Given the challenge of implementing PL94-142 in rural areas along with the growth of cooperative arrangements, this study is aimed at discovering the aspects of PL94-142 that prove both most and least problematic for rural special education cooperatives. Policy implication resulting from this study will be delineated.

Research Methodology

Sample. The United States is divided into ten Federal Education Regions. This study draws its sample from two of them: Region IV comprised of eight Southern States, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North

Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee; and, Region V comprised of six Midwestern States, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin. These two regions were selected because they include some of the nation's most rural areas.

The survey sample was obtained by writing to the State Department of Education in each of the 14 states in Federal Education Regions IV and V and requesting a listing of special education cooperatives. Through this information it was determined whether cooperative arrangements existed within the state of concern. For the purposes of this study, a cooperative is defined as any inter-district administrative arrangement that provides specific services to member school districts. Cooperatives range from informal agreements between two or more local school districts to structures imposed by a state education agency with a regulatory or service orientation. Two states, South Carolina and Florida stated that cooperative arrangements did not exist and were eliminated from the sample.

The lists provided by several State Departments of Education (Mississippi, North Carolina, Alabama, Kentucky, and Ohio) failed to indicate whether listings constituted individual school districts or cooperative arrangements. These states were therefore contacted to verify the existence of cooperative arrangements. This procedure led to the elimination of Mississippi and North Carolina from the sample population as their respective State Departments of Education indicated that administrative authority for special education programs rested solely with either an individual school district or a single county school district.

The remaining listings were then examined to determine the cooperatives serving primarily rural areas. For the purposes of this study, a rural cooperatives is located in an area with less than 150 inhabitants per square mile or where more than 60% of the county inhabitants live in rural areas as defined and measured by the United States Census Bureau. Cooperatives serving regions located within a Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area are not considered rural.

This process resulted in the identification of 157 rural cooperatives in 10 states (see pTable 1). The director of each cooperative was then selected for inclusion in the survey.

Table 1
Sample Population of Rural Cooperatives

Region IV		Region V	
State	Number of Cooperatives	State	Number of Cooperatives
Alabama	1	Illinois	22
Georgia	14	Indiana	19
Kentucky	15	Michigan	21
Tennessee	1	Minnesota	37
		Ohio	7
		Wisconsin	20
Totals	31		126

Instruments. To collect data regarding compliance with the mandates of PL94-142, a written questionnaire was developed. The total design method (Dillman, 1978) was used to guide the format and distribution of the questionnaire and to enhance the response rate. This method specifies that the questionnaire be typed in 12 point print and reduced by 79%. The questionnaire is printed in booklet form with the front cover comprised of a title, illustration, necessary instructions and the name and address of the sponsoring agency and the back cover used to thank respondents for completing the questionnaire and to ask for additional comments. Questions are grouped by content area and response category with the least objectionable and most important questions first and the demographic questions last. Aesthetic considerations are important. Therefore a vertical flow is established with questions typed in lower case and answers, comprised of words rather than numbers, typed in upper case. Transitions to aid in continuity are also specified.

The items for the questionnaire were generated from the manuals used by The Federal Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services in monitoring the states for compliance with the mandates of PL94-142. A four point response scale was used for each question: always, usually, rarely, and never. Numerical scores assigned to the responses were 1, 2, 3, and 4 respectively. An unanswered question was assigned a value of 0.

To determine content validity, the questionnaire was submitted to an expert panel including various professors of special education, members of county offices of education, and one memeber of the Federal Office of Education. A pilot test was conducted using a sample of 70 special education administrative units in the Western United States. Based on the results of the pilot study, several questionnaire items were revised.

Factor analysis using a varimax rotation was performed to determine the questionnaire items accounting for the greatest amount of variance. This led to a reduction from 53 to 37 items. (The original and final questionnaire are displayed in Appendix A.) A reliability assessment using Cronbach's Alpha resulted in a standardized item alpha of .85.

In accordance with the procedures specified by Dillman, each questionnaire was assigned an identification number located in the upper right hand corner of the front page for follow-up purposes. A cover letter along with a self-addressed stamped envelope were mailed to each subject on a Tuesday. One week after the original mailing, a postcard serving as a thank you to those who had responded and as a reminder to those who had not was mailed. Three weeks after the first mailing, a letter and replacement questionnaire was sent to all non-respondents. At the end of seven weeks, a third and final mailing took place.

Data analysis. As responses were received, each questionnaire was coded using the numberical values assigned to the response scale (always=1; usually=2; rarely=3; never=4; no response=0). The data was then entered for use with the Frequencies program from the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences to determine the individual items that proved bost least and most difficult for rural cooperatives regarding compliance with the mandates of PL94-142.

Results

Of the 157 rural cooperative directors surveyed in Federal Education Regions IV and V, 135 (86%) usable responses were received. One person (from Illinois) refused to complete the questionnaire. Another person (from Kentucky) had retired and the position had not been filled. (This information was sent by a person in the agency who had previously completed the questionnaire). Twenty survey recipients failed to return the questionnaire (see Table 2).

Of the 135 completed questionnaires, six respondents (two from Minnesota, one from Illinois, one from Georgia, and two from Kentucky) indicated that they represented individual school districts rather than cooperative arrangements and were eliminated from the data analysis procedures. By states within regions, the sample population of usuable responses is displayed in Table 2.

Table 2
Responding Cooperatives

Region IV				Region V			
State	Eligible Respondents	Responses Received	%	State	Eligible Respondents	Responses Received	%
Alabama	1	1	100	Illinois	21	16	76
Georgia	13	12	92	Indiana	19	19	100
Kentucky	12	12	100	Michigan	21	18	86
Tennessee	1	1	100	Minnesota	35	30	86
				Ohio	7	6	86
				Wisconsin	20	14	70
Totals	27	26	96		123	103	87

The following items were judged least difficult for rural cooperatives to implement since 75% of the cooperatives surveyed indicated that they always complied with these items.

1. Individual assessments are performed by qualified personnel (98%).
2. Parental permission is obtained prior to assessing a child suspected of having special education needs (93%).
3. Parental approval is obtained prior to placing a student in a special education program (92%).
4. Due process procedures exist to resolve conflicts that arise between the parents and the school district regarding any aspect of the special education placement procedures (88%).
5. IEPs are reviewed on a yearly basis (85%)
6. Special education teachers attend the IEP review meeting (83%).
7. Children are assessed in their native language (83%).
8. Child Find activities are conducted (81%).
9. The IEP contains all the components required by law (80%).
10. The parents of each child referred for special education evaluation receive an explanation of their rights (77%).
11. Evaluations are conducted by a multidisciplinary team (77%).

12. No single procedure is used as sole criterion for placement in a special education program (77%).

13. If parents disagree with the team decision, attempts are made to reconcile differences (75%).

In contrast, the responding cooperatives reportedly always complied with the following items a maximum of 30% of the time. These items therefore appear to pose the most difficulty for rural cooperatives.

1. Regular educators are prepared to handle special education students placed in the regular classroom (6%).

2. Regular educators take responsibility for special education students placed in their classrooms (16%).

3. Teachers who refer students for special education services are given suggestions to help accommodate these students (19%).

4. Assessments are completed within the time limit specified by PL94-142 (20%).

5. Evaluation personnel attend the IEP review meeting (26%).

6. Inservice programs on special education procedures are provided for regular educators (26%).

7. Classroom alternatives are tried before a student is referred for special education services (30%).

8. Special educators know special education laws (28%).

9. Parents attend IEP meetings (30%).

Discussion

The PL94-142 mandates that prove least difficult for the rural cooperatives surveyed can be divided into three major categories; (1) parental rights, (2) assessment issues, and (3) the Individual Education Plan (IEP). Each of these catgories will be discussed.

Rural school districts apparently have little difficulty obtaining parental permission to assess students referred for special education services. Survey respondents also report little difficulty obtaining permission to place students in special education programs. These findings coincide with the findings of a longitudinal study concerning the implementation of PL94-142 conducted by the Stanford Research Institute (Write, 1982) and may result in part from the preliminary emphasis and institutionalization of PL94-142 procedural requirements as well as the existence of adequate due process procedures. It may also be related to parents' willingness to unquestioningly accept school

district decisions. This is not surprising in view of traditional rural values that afford the school and its personnel a highly respected place in the community making it difficult for some parents to question the school's decisions. Furthermore, despite the provision of the law requiring that parents be informed of their rights, parents may not understand these rights. This occurs because parents are often provided a paper listing the rights specified by PL94-142. Moreover, parental permission may be obtained via mail further limiting the opportunity to clarify questions and assure complete understanding of these rights.

Compliance with items concerning assessment of students referred for special education services proved remarkably easy for the rural cooperatives surveyed despite reported difficulties recruiting and retaining qualified personnl. It therefore appears that the means of providing adequate special education assessments do exist. One explanation for compliance with issues regarding student assessment is the use of community service personnel or services located at some distance from the local school. While such arrangements may preclude the provision of services on a regular basis, they are sufficient to provide the assessments needed. It is also important to note that student assessments did not occur within the time limit specified by PL94-142. This may result from variations between state and federal timelines. It may also result from the existence of assessment backlogs (Write, 1982).

Assessing students in their native language did not pose a problem for the rural cooperatives surveyed. As several respondents indicated, this issue had rarely, if ever arisen due to an absence of non-English speaking students.

Child Find activities are also reported frequently by survey respondents. This also coincides with the Stanford Reasearch Institute's findings. Moreover, in rural communities, people tend to know each other. This makes handicapped children readily identifiable. In addition, due to scarce resources and rural tradition, public agencies tend to work together. This enhances the Child Find process.

Most IEPs reportedly contain all required components. It is not unreasonable to assume that the use of state or regional forms that clearly indicate the required components account for the high degree of compliance noted. In addition, the specificity of the law, the emphasis on procedural requirements, and the state and federal monitoring procedures that regularly occur may also contribute to the ease of compliance.

IEP reviews generally occur on a yearly basis as specified by law. Within the regions studied, the special education teacher usually attends these meetings. Since a small number of students receive special education services, it is relatively easy for special educators to keep track of student needs and attend the review meetings.

The items that proved most difficult for rural cooperatives in complying with the federal mandates, according to this survey, are: (1) issues related to personnel knowlege regarding special education; (2) the timelines specified by the law (discussed previously); and, (3) parental attendance at IEP meetings.

From the results of this survey, regular educators appear either unwilling or unable to work with handicapped children in the regular classroom. One possible explanation for this phenomenon is the lack of suggestions given to regular educators who have referred students for special education services. Another possible explanation is the lack of inservice education provided to regular educators regarding special education. Write (p 127) states that "continually pushing inservice training aside seems to pose an impediment to the successful implementation of PL94-142." Moreover, most of the inservice that has been conducted has been procedural in nature rather than applicable to staff problems. Therefore, resistance to mainstreaming persists.

Parental attendance at IEP meetings may be low because of distance factors. Considerable distance from the child's school due to sparse population, school district consolidation, and regional programs coupled with additional commitments (i.e. family, work, etc.) may preclude parental attendance at the scheduled meetings. Although the law does specify that meetings be held at mutually agreeable times, parents may not request an alternate meeting time due to either a lack of knowledge of their legal rights or their willingness to abide by the school's decisions (discussed previously).

Policy Implications

This survey raises several issues that have implications for both teacher training programs and state legislatures. The implications for each of these agencies will now be discussed.

Teacher Training Programs. This survey indicates that school personnel lack knowledge regarding special education. Thus, both pre-service and inservice training programs for regular educators should include a greater emphasis on the handicapped child in the regular classroom. This training should include a series of courses that encompass:

1. an overview of special education including information concerning a variety of handicapping conditions;
2. the legal mandates and their ramifications for the classroom teacher;
3. practical methods for modifying the classroom to accomodate handicapped children; and,
4. practical experiences that enable both current and prospective educators to realistically practice these techniques.

This training should be retroactive (required of all teachers currently in the field as well as those in training). It should also be conducted

at the local school district level for practicing teachers to assure applicability and transfer of skills learned.

Not only do regular classroom teachers need additional training, special educators also need additional training. Rural special educators are often responsible for the entire special education program. Current teacher training programs do not prepare the future special educator to assume this role and the accompanying responsibilities. Thus, rural special education training programs should include a series of courses that:

1. familiarize students with all aspects of PL94-142 including its implications for the school;
2. teach administrative skills including: policy and program development and implementation; finance; and curriculum development;
3. prepare special educators to consult with regular educators regarding the placement of handicapped children including procedures for modifying the classroom environment as well as adapting teaching materials and methodology;
4. provide consultation skills for working with parents, administrators, and other agencies; and,
5. provide assessment skills, including the ability to: conduct both formal and informal assessments; understand psychological and other types of assessment reports; and translate assessment data into educational programs.

With this training, special educators should be able to assume the roles and responsibilities demanded of the rural special education teacher.

While this survey shows that regular administrators have slightly better knowledge regarding special education than do teachers, most lack an understanding of special education laws and procedures. Since regular administrators often have responsibility for building special education programs, all rural administrative personnel should have training in:

1. special education laws, requirements, and procedures as well as their implications at the building level; and,
2. special education policy development.

Personnel considerations were frequently cited as posing difficulties for rural special education cooperatives. Inability to attract qualified staff was mentioned by many respondents. This is not surprising as Helge (1983) reports that 66% of the districts surveyed used emergency credentials to meet special education staffing needs.

Frequent staff turnover also poses problems for rural cooperatives. Helge reports an attrition rate of 30-50% among new rural special educators. Thus, teacher training institutions must institute programs that train special educators to serve in rural areas. These programs should:

1. actively recruit students from rural areas;
2. familiarize students with rural special education;

3. include extensive rural internships;
4. provide special educators with generalizable, non-categorical skills that will enable them to work with children possessing a variety of handicapping conditions;
5. train students to develop community resources;
6. enable students to serve as their own resources; and,
6. provide follow-up assistance for rural special educators during their first year of teaching.

These types of programs are important because when special educators are trained specifically for service in rural areas, turnover rates diminsh (Helge, 1984a).

State Legislature. Given the above recommendations for changes in teacher training programs, state licensure requirements should be monitored or reformulated to assure that both regular and special educators have both the skills and knowledge necessary to provide quality programs to handicapped children residing in rural areas. Moreover, given the sparse population base and large distances inherent in rural areas as well as the difficulties recruiting and retaining qualified personnel, it is imperative that states modify their teacher certification procedures to meet the needs of rural areas. Non-categorical certification that allows special educators to work with children having a variety of handicapping conditions has been successfully implemented in several states (i.e. Massachusetts and California). This type of certification is imperative as it allows more children to be served in their home school with a properly trained and certified teacher. Other states (i.e. Wyoming and Wisconsin) have also initiated certification requirements that are responsive to the needs of rural schools.

Another policy issue for state legislatures, funding, arises from respondent comments. Many survey respondents indicated that funding inadequacies led to service delivery problems. This occurs because the very nature of rural areas increases the cost of special education services. This makes current reimbursements for special eduction programs inadequate to provide a free appropriate public education to handicapped children residing in rural areas.

Respondents also commented concerning a lack of funds to provide services to students with low-incidence handicapping conditions. Programs for this population are expensive because of the student's service needs. Moreover, by definition, these types of handicaps occur infrequently. Hence, a rural school district may have but one or two children with a specific condition further increasing educational costs.

A lack of funds to attract qualified personnel was also cited as hampering the provision of quality special education programs. Survey respondents commented that the teacher salaries offered by rural school districts are not competitive with their urban counterparts. This makes it difficult to hire the personnel needed to provide quality special education programs.

It is therefore imperative that state legislatures recognize the additional costs inherent in providing special education services in sparsely populated areas. Weighted funding formulas that recognize the additional costs incurred by rural school districts in providing special education services should be implemented (Sher, 1977). Only then will equity of service be achieved.

Conclusions

This study surveyed cooperative arrangements to determine the aspects of PL94-142 that prove both least and most problematic in rural areas. It also delineated several policy issues concerning the provision of quality special education programs in rural areas.

First, teacher training institutions need to alter their preparation programs for both regular and special educators. All programs preparing educators to serve in rural areas should include:

1. familiarity with special education laws and procedures;
2. ability to modify the curriculum to accomodate handicapped learners;
3. specialized training concerning education in rural areas; and,
4. generalizable non-categorical special education skills.

Second, teacher certification boards should examine their teaching license requirements. To comply with the law and provide appropriate programs for all handicapped children, every regular educator needs to be familiar with a variety of handicapping conditions. Regular educators must also be able to accomodate the needs of handicapped children within the regular classroom. Moreover, special educators need to be knowledgeable concerning state and federal special education requirements. In addition, states that do not currently have rural and non-categorical special education certification should institute these types of teaching licenses. Only when the above conditions are met will rural school districts be able to hire adequately trained teachers and provide appropriate programs for the handicapped children they serve.

Third, the legislature needs to alter its funding formulas. These formulas need to be sensitive to the increased service costs experienced by rural school districts in the education of handicapped children. Only when adequate funds are available will equity of services be provided to all children throughout the nation.

Finally, additional study is warrented to aid in the development of rural special education policy and the improvement of services to handicapped children residing in rural areas.

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APPENDIX A

Original Questionnaire
Final Questionnaire
Initial Cover Letter
Postcard
First Follow-up Letter to Non-respondents
Second Follow-up Letter to Non-respondents

Is there anything else you would like to comment on concerning special education in rural areas? If so, please feel free to use this space for that purpose.

Also, any comments you wish to make that you think may help in future efforts at understanding the difficulties inherent in providing special education services in rural areas will be appreciated either here or in a separate letter.

Your contribution to this effort is greatly appreciated. If you would like a summary of results, please print your name and address on the back of the return envelope (NOT on this questionnaire) and a summary will be sent to you.

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SPECIAL EDUCATION IN RURAL AMERICA

This study is aimed at understanding the difficulties encountered by rural school districts in providing services to handicapped children in need of special education and related services. Your time and cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Sandra Silver
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The first section concerns providing **EDUCATIONAL SERVICES** to handicapped children. Realizing that within a give cooperative, educational services may vary from school district to school district, in this section please answer these questions in a manner which reflects the **OVERALL** situation in your cooperative. Please answer all questions. If you wish to comment on any of the questions, please feel free to use the space in the margins. Your comments will be read and taken into account.

The first set of **EDUCATIONAL SERVICE** questions concerns the **ASSESSMENT** of students referred for special education services. *Please circle the category which you feel most accurately describes the overall situation throughout your cooperative.*

(Please circle)

1.) Activities designed to locate, identify, and evaluate handicapped children exist.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

2) Children are referred for special education and related services only after the resources of the regular school program have been considered.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

3) Parental rights are explained to the parents of each child referred for special education evaluation.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

4) Written parental permission is obtained prior to initiating special education assessment procedures.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

56.) My agency is best described as:

1 A REGIONAL STATE AGENCY

2 A FORMAL INTERMEDIATE UNIT
(the second level in a three tier state system)

3 A SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

4 A VOLUNTARY COOPERATIVE
(administrative authority has been granted to the cooperative by member school districts)

5 JOINT AGREEMENT COOPERATIVE
(service and advice are provided, administrative authority remains at the local school district level)

6 A SATELLITE COOPERATIVE
(Special education administrative services are provided by one school district to a number of small school districts in close proximity)

7 A SCHOOL STUDY COUNCIL
(also called school development councils)

8 OTHER (Please specify)_____

57.)My cooperative has been through a state compliance review in the last three years.

1 NO

2 YES (year 19__)

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The last set of questions asks you to **DESCRIBE** your cooperative. This information will be used only in analyzing the data. Please rest assured that your answers will remain confidential.

Please *circle* the number of the item that most accurately describes your agency.

54.) The number of school districts in my cooperative is:

1 LESS THAN 15

2 15-29

3 30-49

4 OVER 50

55.) The square mileage covered by my cooperative is:

1 LESS THAN 100 SQUARE MILES

2 100-499 SQUARE MILES

3 500-999 SQUARE MILES

4 OVER 1000 SQUARE MILES

(Please circle)

5.) An individual assessment by qualified, licensed personnel is conducted for each child referred for special education services.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

6.) Evaluations are conducted by multidisciplinary team.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

7.) No single procedure is used as sole criterion for placement in a special education program.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

8.) Tests are administered in the child's native language.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

9.) Tests administered address specific areas of educational need.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

10.) Assessments are completed in all areas of suspected disability.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

11.) Assessment procedures are completed within 30 calendar days of receipt of parental permission to assess.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

(Please circle)

12.) A written report of assessment results is prepared by each person who evaluates the child.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

13.) For children with a suspected learning disability, a classroom observation is performed by someone other than the child's regular classroom teacher.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

14.) For children with learning disabilities, a written report of evaluation results including a statement of determination of a learning disability and the basis for making the determination exists.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

15.) For learning disabled children, each team member certified in writing that the evaluation report reflects his/her conclusions.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

16.) A separate statement is submitted by a team member if the above report does not reflect his/her conclusions.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

3.) My cooperative provides the following services:

(Please circle)

Psychological..... DIAGNOSTIC CONSULTANT DIRECT SERVICE

Social Work..... DIAGNOSTIC CONSULTANT DIRECT SERVICE

Speech and Language..... DIAGNOSTIC CONSULTANT DIRECT SERVICE

Adaptive Phys. Ed..... DIAGNOSTIC CONSULTANT DIRECT SERVICE

Occupational Therapy..... DIAGNOSTIC CONSULTANT DIRECT SERVICE

Physical Therapy..... DIAGNOSTIC CONSULTANT DIRECT SERVICE

Special Education Teacher (Please specify area(s))

_____ DIAGNOSTIC CONSULTANT DIRECT SERVICE

_____ DIAGNOSTIC CONSULTANT DIRECT SERVICE

_____ DIAGNOSTIC CONSULTANT DIRECT SERVICE

Other (Please specify)

_____ DIAGNOSTIC CONSULTANT DIRECT SERVICE

_____ DIAGNOSTIC CONSULTANT DIRECT SERVICE

_____ DIAGNOSTIC CONSULTANT DIRECT SERVICE

The next set of questions is aimed at understanding the administrative **SERVICES** provided by your agency.

Please circle the number of each category that applies.

51.) My cooperative serves as a(n):

1 SERVICE AGENCY

2 ADVISORY AGENCY

3 ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCY

4 REGULATORY AGENCY

52.) My cooperative provides the following administrative services:

1 BUDGET FORMATION

2 BUDGET REVIEW

3 SPECIAL EDUCATION PLAN FORMATION

4 SPECIAL EDUCATION PLAN REVIEW

5 PROGRAM SUPERVISION

6 IN-SERVICE EDUCATION

7 OTHER (Please specify)_____

8 _____

9 _____

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The next section concerns **PLACEMENT** of children determined to be in need of special education services.

Please circle the category which you feel most accurately describes the overall situation in your cooperative.

(Please circle)

17.) An IEP meeting is held within 30 calendar days of determination of a need for special education services.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

18.) The following people participate in the IEP meeting:

a.) the child's teacher.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

b.) the child's parent(s).....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

c.) evaluation personnel.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

d.) administrative representative.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

e.) other (please specify) _____.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

19.) When it is determined that a special education need exists, a written IEP is completed prior to the provision of services.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

(Please circle)

20.) An IEP is implemented for each child diagnosed as having special education needs as soon as possible following the IEP meeting....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

21.) Written parental approval is obtained prior to placing any student in a special education program....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

22.) Students diagnosed as having special education needs are placed in appropriate classes.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

23.) Student placement is based on a written IEP.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

24.) If parents disagree with the team decision, attempts are made to reconcile differences.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

25.) Due process procedures consistent with state and federal requirements are in place.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

(Please circle)

46.) District superintendents are aware of district procedures for the determination of eligibility for special education services.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

47.) District superintendents are knowledgeable concerning special education legal requirements.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

48.) Cooperative personnel are aware of special education referral procedures for each building they serve.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

49.) Cooperative personnel are knowledgeable about special education legal requirements.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

50.) Cooperative personnel hold in-service programs regarding special education requirements for:

a.) regular education personnel.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

b.) special education personnel.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

c.) administrative personnel.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

The next set of questions is aimed at understanding the **SERVICES** provided by your agency.

Please circle the number of **EACH** *type of service provided by your agency.*

38.) My agency provides the following services:

1 Psychological Services

2 Social Work Services

3 Speech and Language Services

4 Adaptive Physical Education Services

5 Occupational Therapy Services

6 Physical Therapy Services

7 Preschool Screening

9 Audiological Services

10 Other (Please Specify)_____

39.) In providing services to handicapped children, my agency actively uses:

1 Volunteers

2 Community Service Organizations

3 University Students

4 Paraprofessionals

5 Related Professionals

6 Other (Please specify)_____

40.) The following technologies are available for use by handicapped students served by my agency:

1 Microcomputers

2 Video Discs

3 Telecomunications

4 Satellite Communications

5 Other (Please specify)_____

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The next section concerns **PROGRAMMING** for students determined to be in need of special education services.

Please circle the category that most closely describes the overall situation in your agency.

19.) An IEP is in effect at the beginning of the school year for each child receiving special education services.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

20.) The written IEP contains the child's current level of educational performance, long term goals, short term objectives, required special services, extent of participation in the regular education program, date of initiation of services, and expected service duration.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

21.) IEP's are reviewed and/or revised at least yearly.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

22.) The following people attend the meeting to review or revise the IEP:

a.) the child's teacher.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

b.) the child's parent(s).....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

c.) evaluation personnel.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

d.) administrative representative.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

e.) special education teacher.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

23.) Children receiving special education services are reevaluated at least once every three years.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

24.) Continuous evaluation of the effects of special education programs to insure high quality programs are made annually.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

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The next section concerns KNOWLEDGE of special education procedures.

Please circle the category that you feel best describes the **OVERALL** *situation in your agency.*

(Please circle)

25.) Regular classroom teachers have been informed of building special education referral procedures.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

26.) Regular classroom teachers have been informed regarding special education placement procedures.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

27.) For each child referred for special education services, the regular classroom teacher is given suggestions to help maximize student learning in the regular classroom.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

28.) Regular education personnel are adequately prepared to provide educational instruction and services to individuals with special needs.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

29.) Regular classroom teachers take responsibility for the education of each handicapped child while he/she is in the regular classroom.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

30.) All personnel serving handicapped children are qualified and hold appropriate credentials to teach the children placed in their classrooms.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

31.) Special education teachers know special education legal requirements.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

32.) Building principals are aware of special education referral procedure.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

33.) Building principals have been informed regarding special education evaluation procedures.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

34.) Building principals have been informed of special education placement procedures.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

35.) District superintendents are aware of district procedures for the determination of eligibility for special education services.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

36.) District superintendents have been informed of special education legal requirements.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

37.) In-service programs regarding special education requirements are held for:

a.) regular education personnel.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

b.) special education personnel.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

c.) administrative personnel.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

The last set of questions asks you to **DESCRIBE** your agency. This information will be used only in analyzing the data. Please rest assured that your answers will remain confidential.

Please fill in the blank with the number that best describes your agency. If you are unsure of any figure, please supply your best estimate.

42.) My agency serves _____ school district(s).

43.) My agency serves _____ schools.

44.) My agency serves approximately _____ square miles.

45.) My agency serves _____ handicapped children.

46.) The regular education population served by my agency is _____.

47.) My agency hires _____ professional personnel.

48.) A Special Education Compliance Review of my agency was conducted by the state in 19____.

(Please circle)

7.) No single procedure is used as sole criterion for placement in a special education program.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

8.) Tests are administered in the child's native language.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

9.) Tests administered address specific areas of educational need.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

10.) Assessments are completed in all areas of suspected disability.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

11.) Assessment procedures are completed within 30 calendar days of receipt of parental permission to assess.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

12.) A written report of assessment results is prepared by each person who evaluates the child.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

The next section concerns **PLACEMENT** of children determined to be in need of special education services.

Please circle the category that you feel most accurately describes the overall situation in your agency.

13.) An IEP meeting is held within 30 calendar days of determination of a need for special education services.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

14.) The following people participate in the IEP meeting:

a.) the child's teacher.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

b.) the child's parent(s).....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

c.) evaluation personnel.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

d.) administrative representative.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

e.) a special education teacher.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

15.) When it is determined that a special education need exists, a written IEP is completed prior to the provision of services.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

16.) Written parental approval is obtained prior to placing any student in a special education program.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

17.) If parents disagree with the team decision, attempts are made to reconcile differences.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

18.) Due process procedures consistent with state and federal requirements exist.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

41.) The following alternatives are used by my agency to provide special education services to handicapped children:

1 Hospital and Treatment Centers

2 Hospital Schools

3 Residential Schools

4 Special Day Schools

5 Special Day Classes

6 Resource Room Programs

7 Regular Classroom Without Consultation

8 Regional Special Schools

9 Regional Special Classes

10 Non-categorical Resource Rooms

11 Full Time Teacher/Consultant to Regular Educators

12 Itinerant Teacher/Consultant to Regular Educators

13 Itinerant Home Trainer

14 Parent Trainer with Support Services

15 Telephone Linkage of Teacher and Student

16 Televised Instruction

17 Other (Please Specify)_____

Is there anything else you would like to comment on concerning special education in rural areas? If so, please feel free to use this space for that purpose.

Also, any comments you wish to make that you think may help in future efforts at understanding the difficulties inherent in providing special education services in rural areas will be appreciated either here or in a separate letter.

Your contribution to this effort is greatly appreciated. If you would like a summary of results, please print your name and address on the back of the return envelope (NOT on this questionnaire) and a summary will be sent to you.

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SPECIAL EDUCATION IN RURAL AMERICA

This study is aimed at understanding the difficulties encountered by rural school districts in providing services to handicapped children in need of special education and related services. Your time and cooperation are greatly appreciated.

Sandra Silver
Educational Administration and Evaluation
4607 Tolman Hall
University of California
Berkeley, CA 94720

The first section concerns providing **EDUCATIONAL SERVICES** to handicapped children. Realizing that within a give agency, educational services may vary from school to school, in this section please answer these questions in a manner that reflects the **OVERALL** situation in your agency. Please answer all questions. If you wish to comment on any of the questions, please feel free to use the space in the margins. Your comments will be read and taken into account.

The first set of **EDUCATIONAL SERVICE** questions concerns the **ASSESSMENT** of students referred for special education services. *Please circle the category that you feel most accurately describes the overall situation throughout your agency.*

1.) Activities designed to locate, identify, and evaluate handicapped children exist....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

2.) Children are referred for special education and related services only after the resources of the regular school program have been considered.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

3.) Parental rights are explained to the parents of each child referred for special education evaluation.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

4.) Written parental permission is obtained prior to initiating special education assessment procedures.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

5.) An individual assessment by qualified personnel is conducted for each child referred for special education services.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

6.) Evaluations are conducted by multi-disciplinary teams.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

49.) Please choose the **ONE** answer that best describes your agency.

1 A REGIONAL STATE AGENCY

2 A FORMAL INTERMEDIATE UNIT
(the second level in a three tier state system)

3 A MANDATED REGIONAL SERVICE AGENCY

4 A SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
(enabled by state legislation to provide designated services)

5 A VOLUNTARY COOPERATIVE
(administrative authority has been granted to the cooperative by member school districts)

6 JOINT AGREEMENT COOPERATIVE
(service and advice are provided, administrative authority remains at the local school district level)

7 A SATELLITE COOPERATIVE
(Special education administrative services are provided by one school district to a number of small school districts in close proximity)

8 A SINGLE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

9 AN INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Do you belong to a cooperative?
1 YES
2 NO
Why or why not?_____

_____

(Please circle)

30.) IEP's are reviewed and/or revised at least yearly.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

31.) The following people attend the meeting to review or revise the IEP:

a.) the child's teacher.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

b.) the child's parent(s).....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

c.) evaluation personnel.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

d.) administrative representative.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

e.) other (please specify) _____.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

32.) Children receiving special education services are reevaluated at least once every three years.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

33.) Continuous evaluation of the effects of special education programs to insure high quality programs are made regularly.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

The next section concerns teacher knowledge of special education procedures. **KNOWLEDGE** of special education procedures.

Please circle the category which you feel best describes the **OVERALL** *situation in your cooperative.*

(Please circle)

34.) Regular classroom teachers have been informed of building special education referral procedures.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

35.) Regular classroom teachers understand special education diagnostic procedures.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

36.) Regular classroom teachers understand special education placement procedures.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

37.) For each child referred for special education services, the regular classroom teacher is given suggestions to help maximize student learning in the regular classroom.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

38.) Regular education personnel are adequately prepared to provide educational instruction and services to individuals with special needs.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

(Please circle)

39.) Regular classroom teachers take responsibility for the education of each handicapped child while he/she is in the regular classroom.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

40.) All personnel serving handicapped children are qualified and hold appropriate credentials to teach the children placed in their classrooms.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

41.) Special education teachers have been provided information concerning building special education referral procedures.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

42.) Special education teachers know special education legal requirements.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

43.) Building principals are aware of special education referral procedures.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

44.) Building principals understand special education evaluation procedures.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

45.) Building principals understand special education placement procedures.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

The next section concerns **PROGRAMMING** for students determined to be in need of special education services.

Please circle the category that most closely describes the overall situation in your cooperative.

(Please circle)

26.) A continuum of alternative placements including regular class, special class, home instruction, hospital and institution, and support services in the regular classroom is available.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

27.) Children are educated in the regular classroom to the maximum extent possible.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

28.) An IEP is in effect at the beginning of the schools year for each child receiving special education services.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

29.) The written IEP contains:

a.) child's present level of performance.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

b.) goals.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

c.) objectives.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

d.) required special services.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

e.) participation in regular programs.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

f.) date of service initiation.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

g.) anticipated duration of services.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY OFTEN SOMETIMES NEVER

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

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SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94720

May 7, 1985

Dear

As part of the joint doctoral program in Special Education Administration between the University of California, Berkeley and San Francisco State University, I am conducting a survey regarding the relationship of size and type of cooperative arrangement to the provision of special education services to handicapped children residing in rural areas. I invite your participation in this study through the completion of the enclosed questionnaire.

As a student interested in rural special education, I have become aware of the lack of research in this area. The need for research has been decreed in many of the articles I have read. This need is only beginning to be heard. I hope that this study will aid in filling the research gap which currently exists in the rural special education literature.

Please complete the enclosed form at your earliest convenience and return it in the stamped, self-addressed envelope provided. Each survey has been assigned a number to help in conducting follow up. Please be assured that your answers will remain confidential. Should you have any questions or wish to receive further information please feel free to contact me at the above address.

Thank you for your kind cooperation. Should you desire a summary of research findings, please print your name and address on the back of the return envelope and a summary will be sent to you. Your return of the enclosed questionnaire is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Sandra Silver
Doctoral Student

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May 14, 1985

Last week a questionnaire aimed at understanding the difficulties in providing special education services to handicapped children was sent to you. Your name was obtained from a listing of rural special education cooperatives provided by the State Department of Education.

If you have already completed and returned the questionnaire, I wish to thank you. If not, please do so today. Because the survey was sent to each cooperative in Federal Education Regions IV and V, it is extremely important that your response be included so that the results of this study can accurately represent the rural special education situation.

Sincerely,

Sandra Silver

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

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SCHOOL OF EDUCATION BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94720

May 28, 1985

Dear

About three weeks ago I wrote to you concerning a study I am conducting regarding the provision of special education services to handicapped students residing in rural areas. As of today, you completed questionnaire has not been received.

This study has been undertaken due to the lack of information available regarding the administration of special education programs in rural areas. The need for research on this topic is noted repeatedly throughout the special education literature. While this research need is beginning to be addressed, it is hoped that this study will aid in filling the research gap and understanding the difficulties encountered when attempting to provide special education services to handicapped children residing in rural areas.

I am writing to you again because of the significance of each questionnaire to the interpretation of data received. Your name was supplied by the State Department of Education. Since the questionnaire was sent to each rural cooperative in Federal Education Regions IV and V it is essential that each questionnaire be returned so that the results of this survey can truly reflect the rural special education situation encountered in these two regions.

In the event our letters have crossed in the mail, please forgive my impatience. If by chance your questionnaire has been misplaced, a replacement questionnaire is enclosed.

Your cooperation in completing this survey is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Sandra Silver
Doctoral Student

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SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94720

June 25, 1985

Dear

I am writing to you about my study regarding the relationship of size and type of cooperative arrangement to the provision of special education services to handicapped children residing in rural areas. Your completed questionnaire has not yet been received.

The large number of questionnaires returned is very encouraging. However, whether this study will accurately depict the rural special education situation depends on you and the others who have not yet responded. This is because research suggests that those who do not respond may differ in some ways from those who do.

This study is one of the few being done on special education in rural areas. It is hoped that this study will not only describe the difficulties encountered in providing special education services to handicapped children residing in rural areas, but will also have legislative impacts. Thus the usefulness of this study depends on how accurately the responses portray the rural special education situation.

If for some reason my earlier correspondence did not reach you, a replacement questionnaire is enclosed. May I urge you to complete and return it as quickly as possible.

I will be happy to send you a copy of the results of this study if you want. Simply put your name, address, and "copy of results" on the back of the return envelope. I expect to have the summaries ready to send early next fall.

Your contribution to the success of this study is greatly appreciated.

If for some reason you have decided not to participate in this study, it would be helpful if you would take a few minutes to jot down your reasons for not completing the survey and returning it along with the questionnaire in the enclosed envelope. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sandra Silver
Doctoral Student

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Is there anything else you would like to comment on concerning special education in rural areas? If so, please feel free to use this space for that purpose.

Also, any comments you wish to make that you think may help in future efforts at understanding the difficulties inherent in providing special education services in rural areas will be appreciated either here or in a separate letter.

Your contribution to this effort is greatly appreciated. If you would like a summary of results, please print your name and address on the back of the return envelope (NOT on this questionnaire) and a summary will be sent to you.

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SPECIAL EDUCATION IN RURAL AMERICA

This study is aimed at understanding the difficulties encountered by rural school districts in providing services to handicapped children in need of special education and related services. Your time and cooperation are greatly appreciated.

Sandra Silver
Educational Administration and Evaluation
4607 Tolman Hall
University of California
Berkeley, CA 94720

The first section concerns providing **EDUCATIONAL SERVICES** to handicapped children. Realizing that within a give agency, educational services may vary from school to school, in this section please answer these questions in a manner that reflects the **OVERALL** situation in your agency. Please answer all questions. If you wish to comment on any of the questions, please feel free to use the space in the margins. Your comments will be read and taken into account.

The first set of **EDUCATIONAL SERVICE** questions concerns the **ASSESSMENT** of students referred for special education services. ***Please circle the category that you feel most accurately describes the overall situation throughout your agency.***

1.) Activities designed to locate, identify, and evaluate handicapped children exist....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

2.) Children are referred for special education and related services only after the resources of the regular school program have been considered.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

3.) Parental rights are explained to the parents of each child referred for special education evaluation.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

4.) Written parental permission is obtained prior to initiating special education assessment procedures.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

5.) An individual assessment by qualified personnel is conducted for each child referred for special education services.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

6.) Evaluations are conducted by multidisciplinary teams.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

49.) Please choose the ONE answer that best describes your agency.

1 A REGIONAL STATE AGENCY

2 A FORMAL INTERMEDIATE UNIT
(the second level in a three tier state system)

3 A MANDATED REGIONAL SERVICE AGENCY

4 A SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
(enabled by state legislation to provide designated services)

5 A VOLUNTARY COOPERATIVE
(administrative authority has been granted to the cooperative by member school districts)

6 JOINT AGREEMENT COOPERATIVE
(service and advice are provided, administrative authority remains at the local school district level)

7 A SATELLITE COOPERATIVE
(Special education administrative services are provided by one school district to a number of small school districts in close proximity)

8 A SINGLE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

9 AN INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Do you belong to a cooperative?
1 YES
2 NO
Why or why not?_____

_____

The next section concerns **PLACEMENT** of children determined to be in need of special education services.

Please circle the category that you feel most accurately describes the overall situation in your agency.

13.) An IEP meeting is held within 30 calendar days of determination of a need for special education services.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

14.) The following people participate in the IEP meeting:

a.) the child's teacher.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

b.) the child's parent(s).....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

c.) evaluation personnel.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

d.) administrative representative.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

e.) a special education teacher.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

15.) When it is determined that a special education need exists, a written IEP is completed prior to the provision of services.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

16.) Written parental approval is obtained prior to placing any student in a special education program.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

17.) If parents disagree with the team decision, attempts are made to reconcile differences.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

18.) Due process procedures consistent with state and federal requirements exist.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

41.) The following alternatives are used by my agency to provide special education services to handicapped children:

1 Hospital and Treatment Centers

2 Hospital Schools

3 Residential Schools

4 Special Day Schools

5 Special Day Classes

6 Resource Room Programs

7 Regular Classroom Without Consultation

8 Regional Special Schools

9 Regional Special Classes

10 Non-categorical Resource Rooms

11 Full Time Teacher/Consultant to Regular Educators

12 Itinerant Teacher/Consultant to Regular Educators

13 Itinerant Home Trainer

14 Parent Trainer with Support Services

15 Telephone Linkage of Teacher and Student

16 Televised Instruction

17 Other (Please Specify)_____

The last set of questions asks you to **DESCRIBE** your agency. This information will be used only in analyzing the data. Please rest assured that your answers will remain confidential.

Please fill in the blank with the number that best describes your agency. If you are unsure of any figure, please supply your best estimate.

42.) My agency serves _____ school district(s).

43.) My agency serves _____ schools.

44.) My agency serves approximately _____ square miles.

45.) My agency serves _____ handicapped children.

46.) The regular education population served by my agency is _____.

47.) My agency hires _____ professional personnel.

48.) A Special Education Compliance Review of my agency was conducted by the state in 19____.

(Please circle)

7.) No single procedure is used as sole criterion for placement in a special education program.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

8.) Tests are administered in the child's native language.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

9.) Tests administered address specific areas of educational need.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

10.) Assessments are completed in all areas of suspected disability.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

11.) Assessment procedures are completed within 30 calendar days of receipt of parental permission to assess.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

12.) A written report of assessment results is prepared by each person who evaluates the child.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

The next section concerns **KNOWLEDGE** of special education procedures.

Please circle the category that you feel best describes the **OVERALL** *situation in your agency.*

25.) Regular classroom teachers have been informed of building special education referral procedures.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

26.) Regular classroom teachers have been informed regarding special education placement procedures.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

27.) For each child referred for special education services, the regular classroom teacher is given suggestions to help maximize student learning in the regular classroom.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

28.) Regular education personnel are adequately prepared to provide educational instruction and services to individuals with special needs.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

29.) Regular classroom teachers take responsibility for the education of each handicapped child while he/she is in the regular classroom.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

30.) All personnel serving handicapped children are qualified and hold appropriate credentials to teach the children placed in their classrooms.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

31.) Special education teachers know special education legal requirements.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

(Please circle)

32.) Building principals are aware of special education referral procedure.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

33.) Building principals have been informed regarding special education evaluation procedures.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

34.) Building principals have been informed of special education placement procedures.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

35.) District superintendents are aware of district procedures for the determination of eligibility for special education services.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

36.) District superintendents have been informed of special education legal requirements.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

37.) In-service programs regarding special education requirements are held for:

a.) regular education personnel.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

b.) special education personnel.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

c.) administrative personnel.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

The next set of questions is aimed at understanding the **SERVICES** provided by your agency.

Please circle the number of **EACH** *type of service provided by your agency.*

38.) My agency provides the following services:

1 Psychological Services

2 Social Work Services

3 Speech and Language Services

4 Adaptive Physical Education Services

5 Occupational Therapy Services

6 Physical Therapy Services

7 Preschool Screening

9 Audiological Services

10 Other (Please Specify)_____

39.) In providing services to handicapped children, my agency actively uses:

1 Volunteers

2 Community Service Organizations

3 University Students

4 Paraprofessionals

5 Related Professionals

6 Other (Please specify)_____

40.) The following technologies are available for use by handicapped students served by my agency:

1 Microcomputers

2 Video Discs

3 Telecomunications

4 Satellite Communications

5 Other (Please specify)_____

The next section concerns **PROGRAMMING** for students determined to be in need of special education services.

Please circle the category that most closely describes the overall situation in your agency.

19.) An IEP is in effect at the beginning of the school year for each child receiving special education services.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

20.) The written IEP contains the child's current level of educational performance, long term goals, short term objectives, required special services, extent of participation in the regular education program, date of initiation of services, and expected service duration.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

21.) IEP's are reviewed and/or revised at least yearly.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

22.) The following people attend the meeting to review or revise the IEP:

a.) the child's teacher.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

b.) the child's parent(s).....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

c.) evaluation personnel.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

d.) administrative representative.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

e.) special education teacher.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

23.) Children receiving special education services are reevaluated at least once every three years.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER

24.) Continuous evaluation of the effects of special education programs to insure high quality programs are made annually.....-> ALWAYS USUALLY RARELY NEVER